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BY H. RIDER HAGGARD.

Then I fell to reflecting upon the undertaking on which we were bent, and what a wild one it was, and yet how strangely the story seemed to fit in with what had been written centuries ago upon the sherd. Who was this extraordinary woman, queen over a people apparently as extraordinary as herself, and reigning amidst the vestiges of a lost civilization? And what could be the meaning of this story of the Fire that gave unending life? Could it be possible that any fluid or essence could exist that could so fortify these fleshy walls that they should from age to age resist the mines and batterings of decay? It was possible, though not probable. The indefinite continuation of life would not, after all, be half so marvelous a thing as the production of life and its temporary endurance. And if it were true, what then? The person who found it could no doubt rule the world. He could accumulate all the wealth in the world, and all the power, and all the wisdom that is power. He might give a lifetime to the study of each art or science. Well, if that were so, and this She were practically immortal, which I did not for one moment believe, how was it that, with all these things at her feet, she preferred to remain in a cave amongst a society of cannibals? That surely settled the question. The whole story was monstrous, and only worthy of the superstitious days in which it was written. At any rate I was very sure that I would not attempt to attain unending life. I had had far too many worries and disappointments and secret bitternesses during my forty odd years of existence to wish that this state of affairs should be continued indefinitely. And yet I suppose that my life has been, comparatively speaking, a happy one.

And then, reflecting that at the present moment there was far more likelihood of our earthly careers being cut exceedingly short than of their being unduly prolonged, I at last managed to get to sleep, a fact for which anybody who reads this narrative. if anybody ever does, may very probably be thankful.

When I woke again it was just dawning, and the guard and bearers were moving about like ghosts through the dense morning mists, getting ready for our start. The fire had died quite down, and I rose and stretched myself, shivering in every limb from the damp cold of the dawn. Then I looked at Leo. He was sitting up, holding his hands to his head, and I saw that his face was flushed and his eye bright, and yet yellow round the pupil.

"Well, Leo," I said, "how do you feel?" "I feel as though I were going to die," he answered hoarsely. "My head is splitting, my body is trembling, and I am as sick as a cat."

I whistled, or if I did not whistle, I felt inclined to-Leo had got a sharp attack of fever. I went to Job, and asked him for the quinine, of which fortunately we had still a good supply, only to find that Job himself was not much better. He complained of pains across his back, and diaziness, and was almost incapable of helping himself. Then I did the only thing it was possible to do under the circumstances-gave them both about ten grains of quinine, and took a slightly smaller dose myself as a matter of precaution. After that I found Billali, and explained to him how matters stood, asking at the same time what he thought had best be done. He came with me and looked at Leo and Job (whom, by the way, he had named the Pig, on account of his fatness, round face, and small eyes).

"Ah," he said, when we were out of earshot, "the fever! I thought so. The Lion has it badly: but he is young, and he may live. As for the Pig. his attack is not so had; it is the 'little fever' that he has; that always begins with pains across the back; it will spend itself upon his fat."

"Can they go on, my father!" I asked. "Nay, my son, they must go on. If they stop here they will certainly die; and besides, they will be better in the litters than on the ground. By to-night if all goes well, we shall be across the marsh and in good air. Come, let us lift them into the litters and start, for it is very bad to stand still in this morning fog. We can eat our

morning meal as we go."

This we accordingly did, and with a heavy heart I once more set out upon our strange journey. For the first three hours all went as well as could be expected, and then an accident happened that nearly lost us the pleasure of the company of our venerable friend Billali, whose litter was leading the cavalcade. We were going through a particularly dangerous piece of quagmire, in which the bearers sometings sunk up to their knees. Indeed, it was a mystery to me how they contrived to carry the heavy litters at all over such ground as that which we were traversing, though the two spare hands, as well as the four regular ones, had of course to put their shoulders to the pole.

Presently, as we blundered and floundered along, there was a sharp cry, then a storm of exclamations, and, last of all, a most tremendous splash, and the whole caravan halted.

I jumped out of my litter and ran forward. About twenty yards ahead was the edge of one of those sullen peaty pools of which I have spoken, the path we were following running along the top of its bank, which, as it happened, was a steep one. Looking toward this pool, to my horror I saw that Billali's litter was floating on it, and as for Billali himself, he was nowhere to be seen. To make matters clear I may as well explain at once what happened. One of Billali's bearers had unfortunately trodden on a basking snake which had bitten him in the leg. whereon he had, not unnaturally, let go of the pole, and then finding he was tumbling down the bank, grasped at the litter to save him-



A couple of strokes took me to where Billali was struggling.

self. The result of this was what might have been expected. The litter was pulled

over the edge of the bank, the bearers let go, and the whole thing, including Billali and the man who had been bitten, rolled into the slimy pool. When I got to the edge of the water neither of them was to be seen, and, indeed, the unfortunate bearer never was seen again. Either he struck his head against something, or got wedged in the mud, or possibly the snake-bite paralyzed him. At any rate, he vanished. But though Billali was not to be seen, his whereabouts was clear enough from the agitation of the floating litter, in the bearing cloth and curtains of which he was entangled.

"He is there! Our father is there!" said one of the men; but he did not stir a finger to help him, nor did any of the others. They simply stood and stared at the water.

"Out of the way, you brutes!" I shouted in English, and throwing off my hat, I took a run and sprung well out into the horrid slimy-looking pool. A couple of strokes took me to where Billali was struggling beneath the cloth.

Somehow, I don't quite know how, I managed to push this free of him, and his venerable head, all covered in green slime, like that of a yellowish Bacchus with ivy leaves, emerged upon the surface of the water. The rest was easy, for Billali was an eminently practical individual, and had the common sense not to grasp hold of me as drowning people often do, so I got him by the arm, and towed him to the bank, through the mud of which we were with difficulty dragged. Such a filthy spectacle as we presented I have never seen before or since, and it will perhaps give some idea of the almost superhuman dignity of Billali's appearance when I say that, coughing, half drowned, and covered with mud and green slime as he was, with his beautiful beard coming to a dripping point, like a Chinaman's freshly-oiled pig-tail, he still looked venerable and imposing.

"Ye dogs!" he said, addressing the bearers, as soon as he had sufficiently recovered to speak: "ye left me, your father, to drown. Had it not been for this stranger, my son the Baboon, assuredly I should have drowned. Well, I will remember it;" and he fixed them with his gleaming though slightly watery eye in a way I saw they did not like, though they tried to appear sulkily indifferent. "As for thee, my son," the old man went on, turning toward me and grasping my hand, "rest assured that I am thy friend through good and evil. Thou hast saved my life; perchance a day may come when I shall save thine."

After that we cleaned ourselves as best we could, fished out the litter, and went on, minus the man who had been drowned. I don't know if it was owing to his being an unpopular character, or from native indifference and selfishness of temperament, but I am bound to say that nobody seemed to grieve much over his sudden and final disappearance, unless, perhaps, it was the men who had to do his share of the work. (To be Continued.)

NEWSY ITEMS.

For lame back, side of chest, use Shiloh's Porous Plaster. Price 25 cents. W. J. Wilson, agent, Kingston.

Workmen in the Passaic woolen mills wanted their hours of labor reduced from seventy to sixty hours a week and were ordered out by their employer.

Why will you cough when Shiloh's cure will give immediate relief? Price, 10c., 50c and \$1. W. J. Wilson, agent, Kingston. The labour vote in New York will be

divided between the Georgeites and the "Straights." Two conventions will be held, June 15th., at Elmira, and August 17th., at Shiloh's cure will immediately relieve roup, whooping cough and brenchitis. W.

J. Wilson, agent, Kingston. The sleeping car Trinidad, of Buffalo express, on Central & Hudson R. R., jumped the track at Spuyten Duyvil this morning ;

car badly smashed, and occupants severely bruised, but not seriously injured. A nasal injector free with each bottle of Shiloh's catarrh remedy. Price 50c.

A dispatch from Manila announces that the Spanish Tooloo expedition, consisting of 800 men, captured a fortified rebel village on the island of Tapula, after severe tight ing. Heavy losses on both sides. The rebels submitted and the rebel chief was

Sleepless nights made miserable by that terrible cough. Shiloh's cure is the remedy for you. For sale by W. J. Wilson, agent,

The Philadelphia brewers returned to work. They in future will work eleven hours. The Knights of Labor are to be re cognized and other concessions made. The beer was boycotted, which has been raised. Croup, whooping cough and bronchitis immediately relieved by Shiloh's cure. W.

J. Wilson, agent, Kingston. A New York syndicate has bought 4,000 acres of coal land and will build a 100 ton blast furnace. Pittsburg and Youngstown rolling mill machine makers are busy on orders for Southern rolling mills. A 100 ton blast furnace is to be erected at Bristol. East Tennessee.

Shiloh's catarrh remedy-a positive cure for catarrh, diptheria, and canker mouth The scarcity of bricks, which has retarded building operations in some quarters, is now about over, though deliveries are by no means as prompt as the magnitude of building operations demand. Lumber is in heavy supply. Cement, lath, slate, roofing, etc., are all in good supply and command firm prices.

An Open Letter.

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Worth Remembering. Mrs. T. Doap, of Harrietaville, Ont., was for a long time troubled with neuralgia of the stomach. Failing to find benefit from physicians, she tried Burdock Blood Bitters from which she found speedy relief, to which she testifies, hoping it may prove beneficial to others. Many physicians recommend. R.B.B.

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